

State Representative **Dave Quall**

40th District

Mount Vernon Office:

360-428-1023

Olympia Office:

301 John L. O'Brien Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
360-786-7800

E-mail:

quall.dave@leg.wa.gov

Website:

<http://hdc.leg.wa.gov/members/quall>

Committees:

Education (Chair)
Appropriations Subcommittee
on Education

A Report to the 40th District

Dear neighbors,

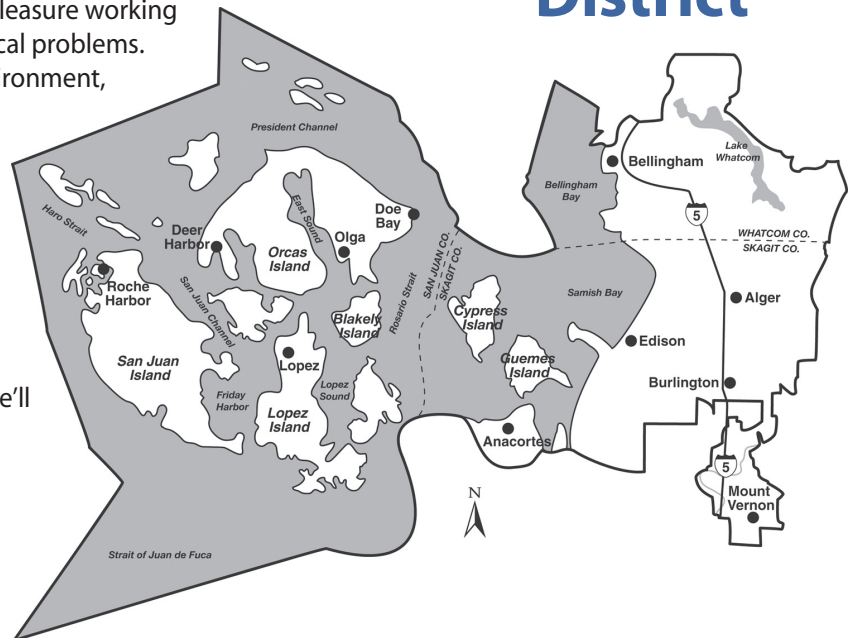
This year's short, 60-day session was a busy one. We successfully tackled some big issues including funding for badly-needed new ferries, and we continued our work on on-going issues such as education reform.

Thank you to all who have dropped me a note or let me know what you think about our work in Olympia. It's always a pleasure working with the people in our district to find solutions to local problems. Whether the issue is agriculture, transportation, environment, or economic development, the best solutions come when we're able to bring all the parties together for a workable solution. I appreciate your ideas.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to point out that no legislation passes without the support of both the House and Senate. In that regard, Senator Spanel has been a wonderful ally in the Senate and I wish her well in her retirement. The 40th district legislators have always worked well as a team and we'll miss her.

Dave Quall

40th Legislative District



Representative Dave Quall

A Report to the 40th District



Math education – where are we now?

In the wake of current debate about how to best help our children achieve academic success, math education has emerged as one of the most contentious and urgent issues facing parents and educators. Lawmakers took steps last year to revamp math standards and curriculum, and this year we continued those efforts.

■ ***New format for math WASL***

In regards to the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), we changed the high school math WASL from its current format to a series of end-of course exams in Algebra I & II, and Integrated Math I & II. Starting with the Class of 2014, students must pass these end-of-course exams to graduate. (House Bill 3166)

■ ***Fresh look at math standards and curriculum***

In addition, lawmakers provided funding for the State Board of Education to continue reviewing new, proposed math standards. The plan is to adopt the new standards in August (Senate Bill 6534). To help make math instruction more consistent throughout the state, we approved the development of an online math curriculum for grades K-12 and have asked the Superintendent of Public Instruction to identify three recommended curricula (House Bill 2598).

A New Direction for our Ferry System

From the need for new vessels to questions about management, ferry reform was a major issue this session. The good news is that lawmakers adopted a five-point plan to ensure our ferry system is efficient, cost-effective and accountable.

Five-Point Plan for Ferry Reform

Control Costs – Lawmakers cut unnecessary overhead, and passed a budget that will keep costs under control. Fares are frozen for 28 months.

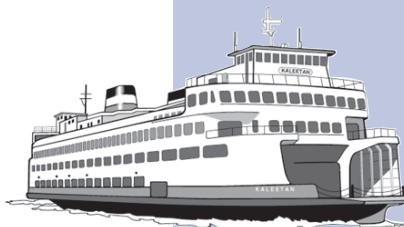
Overhaul Management – Under the control of the Governor, all-new leadership is taking over the agency.

Focus on Service and Safety – Funding is tight so resources will focus on providing safe and reliable service, not expanding terminals and other extras.

Build for the Future – Funding was approved for six new vessels, with the first new vessel to be delivered in March 2009.

Future budgets will focus on top priorities such as long-term vessel replacement and terminal preservation.

Accountability – Oversight measures are now in place to ensure the ferry system is accountable to the Governor and Legislature. Auditing measures are in place to review certain ferry expenditures.



The Three “Rs” of Education – A Balanced Approach to Helping More Students Succeed

For the last decade or more, the mantra of the best and brightest school reformers has been “rigor, relevance and relationships.” These “three Rs” are cited as the pillars of successful schools and rising student achievement across all the demographic fault lines of income, race and culture.

But somehow in Washington, we’ve gotten stuck on rigor, and neglected relationships and relevance. The result is high numbers of students who drop-out or fail because they fail to form meaningful bonds with teachers or classmates and don’t see how their coursework will benefit them after high school. That’s one reason I’m so supportive of skills centers, which provide unique vocational and technical classes to high school students. With so much emphasis on “rigor” and college preparedness, this is an excellent alternative for students who would rather pursue career education that is relevant and helps them build valuable relationships with like-minded mentors and peers.



We can train students to work in our local, fast-growing boat-building industry.

The best part about skills centers is the benefit they provide to local economies. Proposed skills centers must first go through a feasibility study that identifies what kinds of industries would benefit from a local skills center. Last year lawmakers

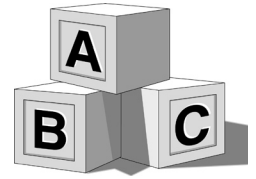
approved \$24.4 million for construction of a new Skagit County Skills Center which will include a Marine Technology Center. Anacortes is poised to become a national leader in boat-building, and the training provided at the center will help us grow this industry and provide good-paying local jobs for our students. Automobile technology, computer-aided design, and medical-assisting are just a few of the other courses that are proposed.

Coming up with an education system that helps each of our children realize their unique and full potential isn’t easy. It isn’t a formula, or a different test, or a piece of legislation. The solution is a sense of proportion, a commitment to equity, and a recognition of the unique abilities in every child. But focusing on balance and building our schools on all three Rs will do wonders for bringing us closer to the original vision for school reform, which was to close the achievement gap and create public schools in which all students succeed.

Case Study in Collaboration

■ *Helping Children with Autism and Other Special Needs*

Federal law requires schools to test nearly all tenth-grade students and measure whether those students are meeting standards in reading, writing and math. In Washington, that test is the WASL.



I recently visited a Mount Vernon special-ed teacher who said that of her 15 high school students, six cannot talk, three read at a third-grade level, yet 13 are required to take the WASL. Why? Only the top 1% of the most severely disabled children are exempt from meeting the same standards as all other children.

But parents and special education groups are trying to change that. Legislation adopted in 2005 created the Caring for Washington Individuals with Autism Task Force. The task force, made up of a diverse group of legislators and advocates, recently submitted a report to the Legislature outlining a full range of recommendations including screening all Washington children for autism before the age of three, providing autism specialists to support teachers and staff, and creating an autism guidebook.

In addition, new awareness-building efforts will help younger students understand what it’s like to walk in the shoes of a child with special needs. We passed legislation that requires public schools to provide activities related to disability history and people with disabilities every October.

These efforts are a great example of what can happen when people come together and fight for a good cause. Thanks to their work, lawmakers are slowly but surely changing the way we accommodate those with different, and valuable, abilities.

Other session successes

■ *Protecting orcas*

The orca whale, our state’s official marine mammal, is considered an endangered species. During the spring, summer and fall, orcas can often be spotted throughout the Puget Sound, but unfortunately, vessel effects are undermining efforts to save these beautiful mammals.

In 2007 San Juan County passed an ordinance prohibiting actions including approaching within 300 feet of an orca, remaining or placing a vessel in the path of an orca, failing to yield to an orca, and feeding an orca. Though most boaters are responsible, I sponsored, and lawmakers approved, House Bill 2514 so state law now ensures a 300-foot zone around orca whales to protect them from the few bad actors in the boating community.

■ *Local farms helping to raise healthy kids*

More good news for local farms – thanks to passage of Senate Bill 6483, Washington is poised to become a national leader in the lo-

cal food movement by putting more Washington-grown produce into our schools and food banks. The added benefit? Locally grown food will help improve our children's health and create a new and thriving market for our farmers.

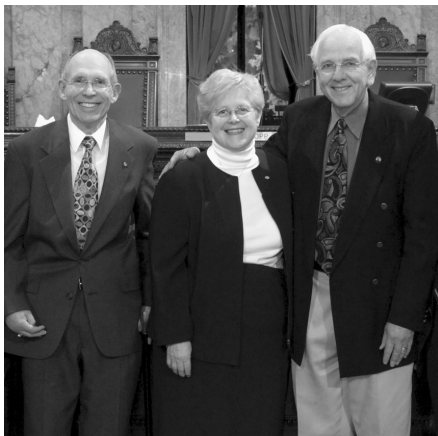
■ **Raising a toast to local farmers**

Washington farmers have reason to celebrate thanks to newly-passed legislation (HB 2959). Beginning in July, a much-reduced license fee is in effect for distillers who produce as much as twenty thousand gallons of spirits, as long as at least half of the raw material is grown in Washington. This is another way for local farmers to provide value-added products and boost their bottom lines.

Farmers and producers interested in learning more about micro-distilling and the new legislation can attend a two-day workshop hosted by the Northwest Agriculture Business Center (NABC) and WSU's Center for Sustaining Agriculture & Natural Resources. Go to www.agbizcenter.org for details.

■ **Tribute to local leader – thank you for all you've done**

Karen Morse is stepping down from her post as President of Western Washington University after seventeen years. Karen is the longest-



serving university president in the state and I've had the pleasure of working with her ever since my first days in the Legislature. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of her students and staff, and is considered an outstanding leader in the state's higher education community.

Thank you, Karen, for all you've done. We wish you the best!

Local students serve a week in Olympia - thank you!

Every year, dozens of high school students spend a week in Olympia serving as pages. Pages help with everything from ceremonial tasks such as presenting the flags to operational tasks such as distributing copies of bills to lawmakers during floor session.

It was a pleasure hosting the wonderful students below. Their work helped make this session a success.



Chris Strachila Morgan Curry

Legislative Walk Challenge

Every year, I participate in the Legislative Walk Challenge sponsored by Regence Blue Shield. Lawmakers are able to win cash prizes for local schools and it's a good opportunity to highlight the importance of fitness and health.

Last year I took first, but this year I faced tough competition and came in a close second by logging in 316,189 steps over the 30 days of the contest. Regence Blue Shield will donate the \$2,500 cash prize to students at a local school who I know will put it to excellent use!